

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0909

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TESTIMONY OF REP. DARREN SOTO
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
MEMBER DAY

Thank you Chairman Takano and Ranking Member Roe for the opportunity to testify before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on my legislative priorities within the jurisdiction of the Committee. I truly appreciate the great sacrifice our veterans have given on behalf of the United States, and I take great pride in serving the needs of veterans in my community.

H.R. 2846, Improving Veterans Access to Congressional Services Act of 2019, Rep. Brian Mast, 20 Cosponsors

H.R. 2846 would allow the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to permit the usage of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities by Members of Congress to meet with veterans and provide constituent services.

Allowing Members of Congress to use VA facilities would improve veteran access to their congressional representatives. H.R. 2846 would allow for expedited assistance and an overall enhancement in the quality of service to our veterans. Congressional offices would be able to readily acquire historical and medical documents in an expedited manner. Veterans will be able to get proper guidance on how to navigate the VA and be referred to the proper VA offices. Furthermore, Congressional offices would have a greater ability to adequately document concerns to the appropriate patient advocate and provide supporting documentation if the patient advocate does not meet a veteran's concern.

Additionally, H.R. 2846, requires the Secretary to establish standard operating procedures to help facilitate and expedite requests for space within a VA facility by Members of Congress. This would further allow Members of Congress to observe the daily operations of the VA to address any concerns regarding VA procedures.

H.R. 2846 is a reasonable solution to improve veteran services by removing roadblocks and providing high level constituent services. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important legislation. I look forward to working with you as H.R. 2846 moves forward in the committee process.

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